

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claim 13 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend claims 10-12 and 14-20 as follows:

**LISTING OF CURRENT CLAIMS**

Claims 1-9. (Canceled)

Claim 10. (Currently Amended) An elongated shut apparatus comprising:

- 5           a)     a primary plate having a crescent shaped cross section defined by two tapered primary lateral ends on either side of a thicker primary middle section, the primary plate having interior and exterior surfaces tapering to opposed ends; and
- b)     a follower plate having a crescent shaped cross section defined by two tapered follower lateral ends on either side of a thicker follower middle section, the follower plate having interior and exterior surfaces tapering to opposed ends, wherein the interior surface of the primary
- 10           plate faces the interior surface of the follower plate,

~~wherein each crescent shaped cross section of the primary plate and the follower plate has concave and convex edges terminating in points at opposing ends thereof.~~

15           wherein the primary plate has a first engaging element extending along a center of the interior surface thereof and the follower plate has a second engaging element extending along a center of the interior surface thereof, the first engaging element engaging the second engaging element.

Claim 11. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising a handle plate connected to a lateral edge of one of the primary plate and the follower plate.

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising a plate connected to a center of the exterior surface of one of the primary plate and the follower plate.

Claim 13. (Canceled)

Claim 14. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim ~~13~~ 10, wherein the first engaging element is a tenon and the second engaging element is a groove.

Claim 15. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim ~~13~~ 10, wherein the first engaging element is a groove and the second engaging element is a tenon.

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the primary plate has a first wing extending along a center of the interior surface thereof and the follower plate has a second wing extending along a center of the interior surface thereof, the first wing contacting the second wing.

Claim 17. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the first wing has a first engaging element and the second wing has a second engaging element, the first and the second engaging elements are selected from a tenon and a groove.

Claim 18. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the primary plate has a first recess chamber with a first fastener extending along a center of the interior surface thereof and the follower plate has a second recess chamber with a second fastener extending along a center of the interior surface thereof, the first fastener and the second fastener meshing together.

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Claim 19. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising a slider movable along the primary plate and the follower plate, and having a central push arm.

Claim 20. (Currently Amended) The shut apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the primary plate and the follower plate are configured to adhere to one another when the shut apparatus is closed.